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State of Delaware
Tourist Attractions Sign Program
Policy



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PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The Tourist Attractions Sign Program was developed as a cooperative effort among the Delaware Department of Transportation (DELDOT) and Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) Division of Tourism (DTO), who are committed to attracting and hosting visitors in Delaware. In addition to directing Delaware's visitors to attractions, the program was developed to ensure the safety of the traveling public, maintain the scenic beauty of the state's communities and roadways and ensure efficient traffic flow. The program and the signs included in it are subject to all Federal, State, County and City/Town regulations. The program is jointly administered by DelDOT and DEDO/DTO. Sign installation and maintenance is provided via an agreement between DelDOT and a vendor, which at this time is Delaware Logos, L.L.C.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Visitors to Delaware enjoy historic sites, natural beauty, recreational facilities, museums and entertainment venues. While Delaware has sign programs to guide both visitors and residents along its highways, visitors sometimes need additional assistance locating specific attractions. The Delaware Tourist Attractions Sign Program is intended to create a predictable and recognizable system to help travelers locate places of interest that will make their experience in Delaware more enjoyable. The focus of the Tourist Attractions Sign Program is the development and installation of informative, clear and uniform signs along the state's interstate highways and other limited access highways. These Attractions Signs will guide drivers to the closest exit for amusement, historic, cultural and recreational attractions throughout the state. Each Attractions Sign will include up to six logo panels highlighting specific attractions, or the areas where attractions are located. After exiting a limited access highway, Ramp Signs along the exit ramps provide directional arrows and mileage indicators to specific attractions or areas. The Tourist Attractions Sign Program complements other existing directional signs, including Destination Signs, Specific Services Signs, and Delaware Historical Markers and History Signs.

ATTRACTIONS SIGN

- Purpose:** Attractions Signs are designed to inform unfamiliar highway travelers of nearby points of interest, and to direct them to the appropriate highway exit.
- Location:** These signs are placed at the closest exit to the attraction on interstate highways and limited access highways, as allowed by law.
- Design:** Attractions Sign will include an individual logo panel for up to six attractions. The background of the sign will be blue.
- Criteria:** In order to be included on an Attractions Sign, an attraction must meet all of the criteria in this policy. This program is only applicable for facilities which have the primary purpose of providing amusement, historical, cultural, or leisure activities to the public.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Meet definition of an “attraction.”
- Be open to the general public at least seven (7) months annually, six (6) hours a day, five (5) days per week during the normal operating season for the type of business, or equivalent hours per week (except this requirement shall not apply to certain facilities such as arenas, auditoriums, performing arts venues, civic centers, stadiums, and flea markets). Public activities must be available during hours of operation.
- If site is located in an unincorporated area, the site must be located within a maximum of fifteen (15) miles along the roadway network of an interchange and must provide written directions or have adequate signage to direct the motorist back to their original route of travel.
- If site is located in a municipal/incorporated boundary, the municipal/incorporated boundary must be located within 1 mile of the interchange and must provide written directions or have adequate signage to direct the motorist back to their original route of travel.
- Provide adequate parking to accommodate normal traffic volumes within walking distance of the attraction.
- Provide public access to restrooms, drinking water and telephone for emergency uses.
- Provide a professionally produced brochure or website. Information in the marketing material must include a description of the attraction and the days and hours of operation. (Note: hours of Operation on marketing materials must match hours of operation on application form.) Brochure must be professionally printed - photocopies are not acceptable.
- Provide annual visitor attendance on application.
- Meet all Americans with Disabilities (ADA) requirements for accessibility
- Not be currently using other Supplemental Guide Signs at the same location as the logo mainline or trailblazer signing.
- Have licensing or approval, where required.
- Be of regional interest to the traveling public and fall into one or more of the following categories:

a. Agri-tourism/Agri-business: A location that allows for the viewing and enjoyment of agricultural activities or marketing of locally grown or produced product including farming, ranching, wineries, breweries, distilleries, farmers markets, and harvest- your-own operations;

b. Amusement Park: A permanent area, which is open to the general public for entertainment rides and food services;

c. Arena: A stadium, sports complex, auditorium, fairground, civic, or convention center.

d. Cultural Site: Shall include any facility for the performing arts, theater, or exhibits that is open to all age groups;

- e. Historical Site or District: Shall include a structure, site, or district that has definite historical significance as determined by the Delaware Historical Society as a historical attraction and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- f. Museum: A facility open to the public in which works of artistic, historical or scientific value are cared for and exhibited to the public;
- g. Natural Phenomenon/Area of Natural Beauty or Scenic Beauty: A feature created by nature or naturally occurring area of outstanding interest to the general public, such as unusual rock formations, caves, lakes, rivers, fossil beds, waterfalls, and similar areas;
- h. Recreational Site or Facility: An area that includes, but is not limited to, bicycling, boating, fishing, golf, hiking, rafting, picnicking, and water skiing;
- i. Zoological/Aquarium/Botanical Park: A facility in which living animals, insects, fish, or plants are kept and exhibited to the public;

Restrictions: A maximum of six individual attraction logo panels may be included on the sign. Each qualifying interchange may have an Attractions Sign along each direction of travel, of only one freeway, at one interchange, if law and space permit. If space does not permit, an attraction may be limited to only one sign, in one direction of travel, on one interchange. In these cases, the annual fee will be approximately half of the full fee.

Fee/Cost: The annual fee to have a logo panel placed on an Attractions Sign is \$1,200 for one direction of travel. This does not include fabrication and installation costs which will be determined separately on a case by case basis. Non-profit organizations shall be exempt from the annual fee. The annual fee also includes recognition on nearby ramp signs and regular maintenance of all signs.

Please Note: It is the responsibility of the participating attraction to pay to replace their logo panel in the event of damage.

Dates: A revised fee for participating in the Attractions Sign Program may be established before July 1 of each year. The annual fee period will begin on the date that a logo panel is installed on an Attractions Sign. The Attraction will be notified by DelDOT's Logo Sign Vendor when their attraction sign has been installed.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

To be considered for inclusion on an Attractions Sign panel, potential sign participants should make sure that they meet all of the criteria outlined in this policy before completing the attached application. Only applications from attractions that meet all the criteria will be considered. The Tourist Attractions Sign Evaluation Committee will review all applications and will determine attraction eligibility. The Evaluation Committee reserves the right to verify all information provided to ensure criteria has been met for an attraction sign. Any changes to the application process and program will be reviewed and take effect on July 1 of each year.

The State of Delaware reserves the right to modify and enhance the Tourist Attractions Sign Program and its criteria. If, during the life of this program, any Acts are passed or Regulations adopted which affect the rights herein granted, the said Acts and Regulations shall be applicable to this program from the date on which they come into force.

After a completed application and a printed brochure has been submitted and reviewed, applicants will be notified by mail if their application has been approved or denied.

GLOSSARY:

- a. License: Refers to approved State and Local health and business licenses/certifications in order to operate.
- b. Manual on Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD): Recognized as the national standard for all traffic control devices installed on any street, highway, bikeway, or private road open to public travel.
- c. Supplemental guide signs: A sign that shows route designations, destinations, directions, distances, services, points of interest, or other geographical, recreational, or cultural information.
- d. Trailblazer signs: Provides directional guidance to a particular road facility from other highways in the vicinity.
- e. Wayfinding signs: Wayfinding signs are part of a coordinated and continuous system of signs that direct tourists and other road users to key civic, cultural, visitor, and recreational attractions and other destinations within a city or a local urbanized or downtown area.